

Northumbria Research Link

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**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



UniversityLibrary

The background of the slide features the coat of arms of Northumbria. It consists of a shield with a red field and a white castle tower. The shield is supported by two white horses with green manes. Above the shield is a crest featuring a red and white flag. The shield is surrounded by a wreath of red and white leaves. At the bottom, a banner reads "DEFENDIT".

**Being Lord Mayor
Dr Geoff O'Brien (the Right Worshipful
that is)**

**Mayor – Civic Leader, Chair of Council
Aka Chain
Group of Mayors Chain Gang**

27th March 2012, Northumbria University

OUTLINE

Tools of the Trade

**From 1216 (Daniel son of Nicholas) to
2012 (Geoff O' [son of] Brien)**

Being Lord Mayor

The Future?



Every job needs tools – the Lord Mayor is no different!!

The Office





Transport







An Official Residence and somewhere to hold receptions



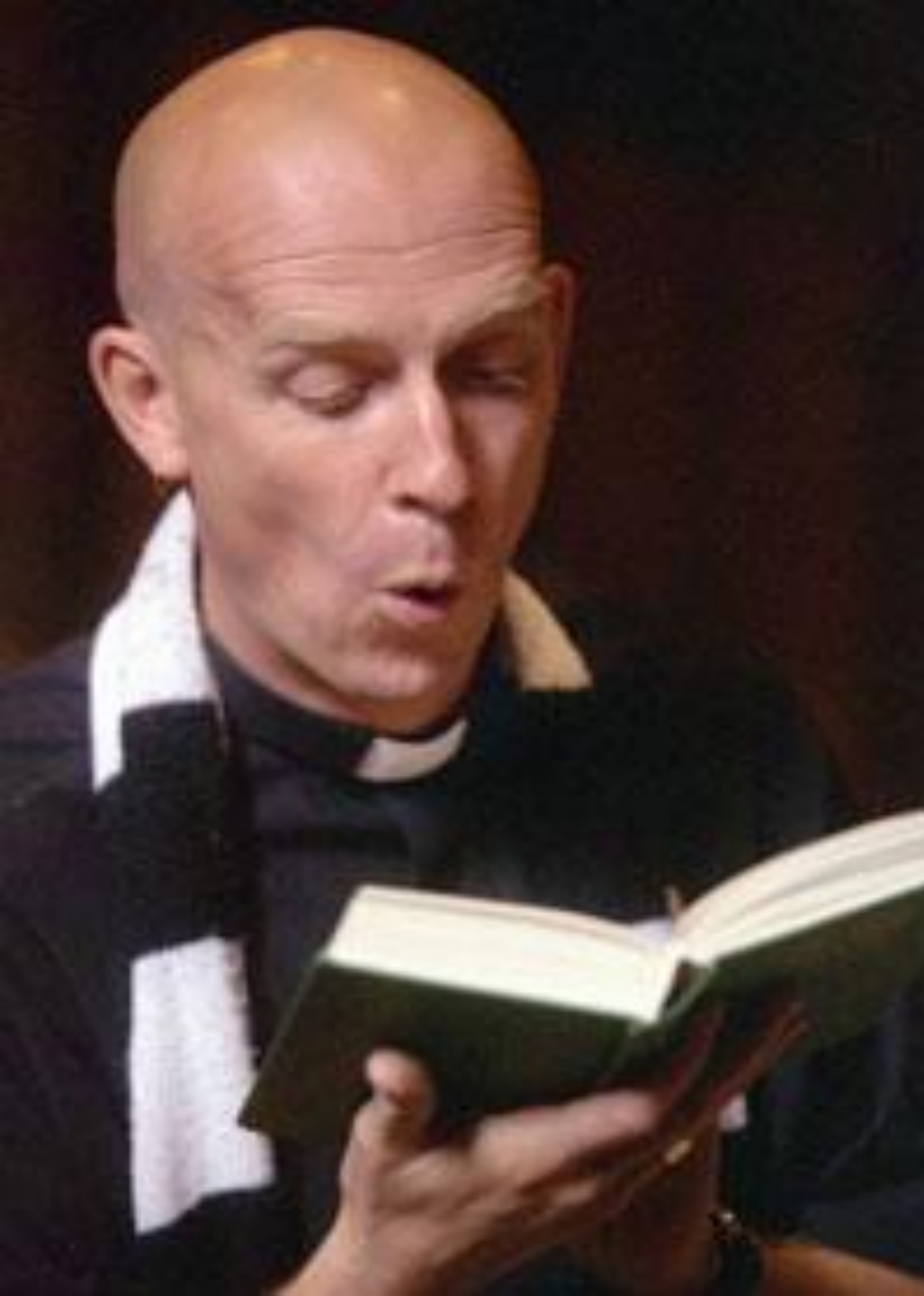






Personal security can be an issue....





Lord Mayor's Chaplain

**Spiritual Guidance is
essential!!**

**Reverend Glynn Evans
St Andrew's Church**

So why do we have a Lord Mayor? A little bit of history

What we know as Newcastle upon Tyne was an important crossing point for the Romans. They built a bridge (Pons Aelius) around AD 120 near to the Swing Bridge and a Gabrosentium (small fort) on the site of the Keep.



Evolution of Governance

After the departure of the Romans around AD400, governance evolved from both Roman and Anglo Saxon traditions

Nobles – Freemen – Slaves (Roman)

Nobles – Freemen – Serfs and Villeins (Anglo Saxon to Medieval)

The Rich – Middle Class – Underclass (Today)

Before the Normans, communities organised themselves into Burghs and rulings, based on customary law, were made in Assemblies or Moots

After the Normans things changed



In 1080 Robert Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror, travelled north to deal with the Scots and at Monkchester built a Motte and Bailey castle on the site of the Gabrosentium – the “New” Castle upon Tyne





Between 1172 and 1177
Henry II replaced Curthose's castle
with the Keep
at a cost of £1,444.

This is the image we
associate with the City

Abbreviated Timeline

Around 1200, stone-faced, evidence of jetties – trade was increasing - principal exports were wool, timber, coal, millstones, dairy produce, fish, salt and hides.

1175 charter granted by Henry II, giving the townspeople some control over their town

1216 King John granted Newcastle a Mayor and also allowed the formation of guilds (known as Misteries) - the Mayor and other officers chosen from within the Guilds. Guild members known as Freemen or Burgesses

Up to 1342 ongoing hostility between the higher Guilds (merchants) and the lesser Guilds (craftsmen) came to a head.

Riots broke out when Two mayors appointed – one higher, one lesser

Higher Guilds: John de Denton (imprisoned and died of starvation in 1344)

Lesser Guilds: Richard de Acton

Riots ensued and Richard III intervened – city was fined and a new election procedure introduced

Abbreviated Timeline

Before 1342 Freemen met in Open Guild to elect the Mayor and officers and take decisions for governing the town.

After 1342 Freemen agreed to elect 24 Freemen (Common Council) to manage the town. Open Guild acted as the governing body.

1350 the Freemen received a royal licence to export coal – this was jealously guarded and laid the foundation for hostility between Newcastle and Sunderland

1388 Mayor William Bishopdale fought bravely at the battle of Otterburn. Richard II granted him the right to have a sword carried before him in procession.

The Sword has come to represent the Mayor's role as Defender of the City. In 1644 Mayor John Marley led the defence against the Scots. Newcastle awarded the motto:

“Fortiter Defendit Triumphans” (Triumphing by Brave Defence).

Abbreviated Timeline

Charters of 1400 and 1600 confirmed the right of the Freemen to hold the civic offices in Newcastle and the Freemen continued to control trade from Tynemouth to the Hedwin Streams (near to Heddon on the Wall)

This continued until 1835 when the Municipal Corporations Act substituted a reformed council for the Common Council.

1882 Newcastle awarded city status

1905 Royal Charter granted the title Lord Mayor in recognition of the City's importance as the Regional Capital.

1954 City Coat of Arms made official by the College of Arms

1972 Local Government Act formalised position of Lord Mayor – selected by councillors and serve for one year

What does the Lord Mayor do?

First Citizen – receive official visitors to the City

Attend memorial services – Remembrance Sunday

Attend Guild meetings of the Freemen

Conduct the induction of new Freemen (they swear to obey the Lord Mayor and defend the city)

Citizenship ceremonies

Attend dinners, openings, birthdays and all sorts of events

Support charitable causes (NSPCC, Islamic Relief, CAFOD)

Meet interesting people

In many ways the office is reactive and responds to requests for the presence of the Lord Mayor

Supporting charitable causes can be very demanding!



Some events, such as opening the Hoppings, can be fun!!



Being Lord Mayor ... one or two points

One important lesson – the amount of time and effort people give to a range of projects is unbelievable – Maytree House, Villa Victoria and NCHLC

You learn new things - Muriel Robb from Jesmond won the Wimbledon Ladies Singles title in 1902

You hear some interesting stories – the Judge and the Lord Mayor, the taxi ride

But there are adverse impacts:-

Personal life

Career

Political life

Religious life

Pomp and circumstance – some mayors dislike the formality (including me).

Herbert Morrison (Mayor of Hackney) disappointed schoolchildren at a Christmas party by not wearing robes and insignia which he disliked.

Seeing the University from the City

Originated as a city institution, but now is a partner with many examples of collaboration

The physical development of the university has transformed the campus and city landscape

The university is an identifiable multi-cultural group of young adults
(and some not so young staff!!)

Research projects in which I am involved include:-

PhD Adaptive City – cash and kind from the city
North Sea Region electric vehicle study (Interreg)

Future Research Possibilities:-

Well-being of returning Armed Services personnel
Impact of induction of women into the Freemen

Being Lord Mayor

Today the Lord Mayor:-

A Symbol of the Authority but with no real power

Symbolises an open society – no longer is the office restricted to a certain group (Freemen or white middle/upper class males). Anyone who is elected to public office could become Lord Mayor/Mayor

Expression of social cohesion – the events you undertake express the social cohesion of the city and can link the city and a whole range of groups. The office can feed-back views and concerns into the political field

Charitable work – can raise the profile of charitable causes

Continuity - Since 1216 there have been 398 Lord Mayor/Mayors.
I am the 399th Mayor and 105th Lord Mayor

The Future

Elected Mayors are the “new” idea, but that idea has been around for a long time in one form or another

However this reform is about form not function

Effective local government needs to have real devolved power

The UK is a very centralised state but its development can be attributed to the people who worked at the local level

Perhaps we need to move draw upon the history of the Mayoralty and move to a model where governance at the local level is truly local



THANK YOU AND ANY QUESTIONS?

